

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Savannah, Georgia

Profile of Drug Indicators

April 2003



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Savannah, Georgia

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, funding, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Population: 131,510 (2000 Census); 137,812 (1990 Census)
- Race/Ethnicity (2000 Census): 37.9% white; 56.8% black/African American; 0.2% American Indian/Alaska Native; 1.5% Asian; 0.1% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 0.1% other; 1.1% two or more races; 2.2% Hispanic/Latino (of any race)
- Savannah is located in Chatham County.

Politics

- Mayor: Floyd Adams, Jr.²
- City Council Members (District): David Jones (1); Gwen Goodman (2); Ellis Cook (3); Courtney Flexon (4); Clifton Jones (5); Tony Thomas (6); Edna Branch Jackson (At Large Post 1); Pete Liakakis (At Large Post 2)³
- City Manager: Michael Brown⁴
- Chief of Police: Dan Flynn⁵
- Chatham County Sheriff: Al St. Lawrence⁶

Programs/Initiatives

- Community Service Specialists⁷
Established in 2001 by the Savannah Police Department, the Community Service Specialists (CSS) respond to calls for service that do not require the presence of a sworn officer (stolen tags, thefts from vehicle, shoplifting, animal complaints, etc.). In 2002, CSS responded to more than 6,200 calls for service.
- Drugs Don't Work⁸
The Drugs Don't Work Council is made up of Savannah business leaders who endorse a drug-free environment in the workplace, schools, and community.

Federal Funding

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program⁹
Since FY 1998 when funding was first available through the Drug-Free Communities Support Program, only one coalition in Savannah received funding. In FY 2002, \$100,000 was awarded to Partners for Community Health.
- Executive Office for Weed and Seed¹⁰
One site in Savannah has received funding and been officially recognized as a Weed and Seed site.
- There were no Savannah recipients of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) FY 2001 Discretionary Funds.¹¹
- Savannah did not receive any funding through the FY 2002 Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Grant Program.¹²
- There were no Savannah recipients of the FY 2002 Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Methamphetamine Grant.¹³

- There were no Savannah recipients of the FY 2001 Housing and Urban Development Drug Elimination Grant.¹⁴
- FY 2001 Office of Justice Programs and Community Oriented Policing Services grant amounts received by Savannah recipients:¹⁵
 - \$488,136 in formula funds
 - \$350,418 in discretionary funds

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- The Savannah Police Department made 9,156 arrests in 2002.¹⁶
- The number of violent crimes reported in Savannah decreased 3.4% from 1,300 in 2001 to 1,256 in 2002. The number of property crimes decreased 2.3% from 10,633 in 2001 to 10,391 in 2002.¹⁷
- During 2002, the Savannah Police Department's Narcotics Eradication Team made 404 arrests.¹⁸
- Preliminary data reported by the Savannah Police Department indicate that there were 17 murders from January to June 2002.¹⁹ During full year 2001, police in Savannah reported 26 murders.²⁰

Number of Offenses Known to Police, Savannah, 2001-June 2002

Type of Offense	Full Year 2001	January-June 2002
Murder	26	17
Forcible rape	70	32
Robbery	840	409
Aggravated assault	602	257
Burglary	2,080	963
Larceny-theft	7,400	3,531
Motor vehicle theft	1,440	810
Arson	53	13

- There were 37 murders reported by law enforcement in Chatham County during 2001.²¹

Number of Offenses Known to Police, Chatham County, 1997-2001

Offense	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Murder	22	36	45	34	37
Rape	67	91	107	99	91
Robbery	629	646	752	804	884
Assault	734	826	989	852	937
Burglary	2,747	2,721	2,956	2,422	2,745
Larceny	8,964	10,553	10,335	8,253	9,688
Vehicle theft	1,297	1,541	1,671	2,073	1,668

Drugs

- Heroin
South American heroin is widely available in Savannah. Heroin is popular in Savannah nightclubs, where it is typically snorted and often is used in combination with other drugs such as MDMA and cocaine.²²
- Club Drugs
The availability and abuse of MDMA is increasing in Savannah.²³

Juveniles

- Results from the 2001 Chatham County/Savannah Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Report indicate that:²⁴
 - 29% of students surveyed reported trying marijuana at some point in their lives; 18% reported being current users of marijuana (used in past 30 days);
 - 4% reported lifetime cocaine use; 3% reported current cocaine use;
 - 12% have sniffed glue to get high;
 - 5% have taken steroids without a doctor's prescription;
 - 2% have used a needle to inject illegal drugs into their bodies.

Enforcement

- The Savannah Police Department Canine Unit became fully operational in March 2002 with 4 dogs.²⁵
- Narcotics Eradication Team (NET)²⁶
Created in 2002, the Savannah Police Department's NET Unit attacks street level drug activity in targeted neighborhoods. The 3 initial target neighborhoods involved in NET activities included Cuyler-Brownsville, East Victorian District, and the Augusta Avenue corridor in West Savannah.
- One of the three Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) Drug Enforcement Investigative Division's Regional Drug Enforcement Offices is in Savannah. This office is responsible for investigating major drug cases such as trafficking, smuggling, clandestine labs and major drug distribution organizations.²⁷
- As of October 31, 2001, there were 510 full-time law enforcement employees in Savannah (408 officers and 102 civilians).²⁸

Trafficking and Seizures

- One of Georgia's two international airports is in Savannah, as is one of the State's two deepwater ports.²⁹
- The Port of Savannah, located near Interstates 16 and 95, received the most containerized cargo in the State. Drugs are transported to Georgia on maritime vessels arriving in this Port.³⁰
- The Port of Savannah is a target for Colombian cocaine traffickers.³¹
- Train and bus carriers connect Savannah with cities used as wholesale drug distribution centers, such as Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, and New York.³²

Courts

➤ Drug Courts³³

As of January 8, 2003, there were no drug courts in existence or being planned in Savannah.

Corrections

- On March 17, 2003, approximately 5% (2,390 inmates) of the Georgia Department of Corrections inmate population (excluding jails) were convicted in Chatham County.³⁴
- On March 17, 2003, there were 197 individuals in the Savannah Men's Therapeutic Community (TC) facility and 74 individuals in the Savannah Women's TC.³⁵

Sources

¹ U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

² Savannah Web site: <http://www.ci.savannah.ga.us/cityweb/webdatabase.nsf>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Savannah Police Department

⁶ Chatham County Web site, Elected Officials and Department Heads, FY 2002: http://www.chathamcounty.org/elec_dhs.htm

⁷ Savannah Police Department, *2002 Annual Report*

⁸ Savannah Chamber of Commerce Web site, Drugs Don't Work section: <http://www.savannahchamber.com/chamberservices/councils/drugs.shtml>

⁹ Drug-Free Communities Support Program Web site, Georgia section: <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/dfcs/states/ga.html>

¹⁰ Executive Office for Weed and Seed Data Center Web site, Georgia section: <http://www.weedandseeddatacenter.org/georgia.html>

¹¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, FY 2001 Discretionary Funds, Georgia section: <http://www.samhsa.gov/funding/content/states01/ga.htm>

¹² Bureau of Justice Assistance Web site, FY 2002 Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Grants: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grant/DrugCourts/02DCgrants.htm>

¹³ Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, *COPS Methamphetamine Grant Announcement*, November 14, 2002: http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/GrantAnnounce/meth_grantees.pdf

¹⁴ Department of Housing and Urban Development, *FY 2001 Federally Assisted Low Income Housing Drug Elimination Grants: Detailed Congressional Report*: <http://www.hud.gov/content/releases/drugelimination.pdf>

¹⁵ Office of Justice Programs, Georgia FY 2001 Office of Justice Programs and Community Oriented Policing Services Grants: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fy2001grants/map/ga.htm>

¹⁶ Savannah Police Department, *2002 Annual Report*

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Preliminary Semiannual Uniform Crime Report, January-June 2002*, December 2002: http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius_02/02ciusprelim.pdf

²⁰ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2001*, October 2002: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/01cius.htm>

²¹ Georgia Bureau of Investigation Web site, Crime Statistics section: <http://www.ganet.org/gbi/gbistat1.html>

²² National Drug Intelligence Center and Drug Enforcement Administration, *Georgia Drug Threat Assessment*, April 2003: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs3/3669/3669p.pdf>

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Chatham County Department of Health, Health Statistics: <http://www.easthealthdistrict.com/statistics.shtml>

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- ²⁵ Savannah Police Department, *2002 Annual Report*
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Investigative Division:
<http://www.ganet.org/gbi/idenforce.html>
- ²⁸ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2001*, October 2002:
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- ²⁹ National Drug Intelligence Center and Drug Enforcement Administration, *Georgia Drug Threat Assessment*, April 2003: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs3/3669/3669p.pdf>
- ³⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹ Drug Enforcement Administration, Georgia State Factsheet:
<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/pubs/states/georgia.html>
- ³² National Drug Intelligence Center and Drug Enforcement Administration, *Georgia Drug Threat Assessment*, April 2003: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs3/3669/3669p.pdf>
- ³³ Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project, *Summary of Drug Court Activity by State and County*, January 8, 2003
- ³⁴ Georgia Department of Corrections, Inmate Profile, March 2003:
<http://www.dcor.state.ga.us/pdf/inms03-03.pdf>
- ³⁵ Ibid.

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